What is claimed is:

1. A system for replacing data services of a server-node connected to a
client-node with data services available from an alternate server-node
operating on a data-packet-network comprising;
    a first server-node;
    a client node coupled by data link to the first server-node;
    an alternate second server-node connected to the network and
    accessible to the client node; and
    a software module;
    characterized in that the software module monitors one or more
quality-of-service values from the first and second server nodes, and
switches communication for the client node between server nodes
accordingly.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the switching is based on comparison of
performance data collected and processed by the software module.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the data services comprise streaming
multimedia media content.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein the software module resides at the client
location.

5. The system of claim 4 wherein the software module operates
transparently to a user operating the client node.

6. A software module for enabling selective replacement of data services of a server-node connected to a client-node with data services available from an alternate server-node operating on a data-packet-network comprising;

5   a data input function for receiving data from external sources;

an analytical function for compiling received data and producing a result based on data comparison; and,

a command function for effecting a client-server connection switch.

10   7. The module of claim 6 wherein the termination of a current client-server connection and the establishment of a replacement client-server connection is based on comparison of performance data collected and processed by the module.

15   8. The module of claim 7 wherein the module resides at the client location.

9. The module of claim 8 wherein the module operates transparently to a user operating the client node.

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10. The module of claim 9 wherein the processed performance data is compared against a pre-set threshold value.

11. The module of claim 10 wherein the collected performance data is

25   equated to a point system and values are assigned to compiled sets of data.

12. The module of claim 11 wherein an option to switch client-server

connection from one server node to an alternate server node is presented to a user operating at the client location.

13. A method for replacing data services of a server-node connected to a client-node with data services available from an alternate server-node operating on a data-packet-network comprising;

(a) monitoring performance characteristics of the server-node connected to the client node, and the performance characteristics of the network path between the server-node and the client-node;

(b) establishing a temporary client-server connection between the client-node and an alternate server-node;

(c) recording performance characteristics of the alternate server-node, and the performance characteristics of the network path between the alternate server-node and the client-node;

(d) comparing the total value of performance characteristics of the server-node with the estimated value of available performance characteristics of the alternate server-node; and

(e) initiating a client-to-server connection switch based on the results of the comparison.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein in step (a), monitored results are continuously compared against a pre-set threshold value for determination of whether to proceed to step (b).

15. The method of claim 13 wherein in step (e), initiation of the client-to server connection switch is user directed from the client location.